The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts of editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor securities in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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VICTORY LOAN

Thru Payroll Savings

WHOLE NO. 1807 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1945 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 35, NO. 48

LABOR, USA

Washington, D. C.—The twenty-first edition of the American Federationist of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, included the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news:

Strictly From Hunger

By LEWIS G. HINES

AFL Legislative Representative

When people are starving and there is no bread, their hunger cannot be satisfied by offering them cotton and democracy. Ideals may be nourishing to the soul, but they offer no comfort to an empty stomach. Because of the grim and terrible existence of widespread starvation in the liberated countries of Europe, all that we have won through the overthrow of Nazism and Fascism in Europe may now be wasted. Unless we immediately come to the rescue of the famished millions of men, women and children who inhabit the scorched earth and devastated cities of the old world, they may begin to hate us, instead of blessing us for their deliverance from dictatorship.

I appeared before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives a few days ago to urge Congress in the name of the seven million members of the AFL to do something at once about this critical situation.

Congress has delayed overlong in appropriating the remaining 550 million dollars of the amount it had previously authorized for relief expenditures by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. As a result of the delay, the operations of this agency in China as well as Europe are grinding to a standstill.

Mercy alone should dictate quick action by Congress to prevent the death of hundreds of thousands of fellow human beings from undernourishment and disease, when we have the means available to save them.

But aside from such humane considerations, it is to our own practical advantage to extend a helping hand to the helpless victims of the world's worst war. As General Eisenhower pointed out, "we must now make our proportionate contribution to the relief of Europe in order to insure the permanence of our military victory." What he meant was that people driven desperate by hunger may again sell themselves into slavery to dictators who promise to feed them. To protect world peace and to strengthen the bonds of international cooperation upon which our future security rests, America must do its share to feed the hungry.

Let's Not Pass a Law

By JOSEPH A. PADWAY

AFL Chief Counsel

Will penalties prevent strikes? This question now comes to the fore again. In two separate moves, which bore all the earmarks of a planned coincidence, some members of Congress and certain die hard employers proposed legislation this week to punish unions for strikes. They have raised the same old cry of "there ought to be a law". The trouble is that strikes cannot be eliminated or even reduced merely by adopting punitive or prohibitory legislation. On the contrary, the whole history of antistrike laws proves that they tend to increase the dispute instead of discouraging them. The temptation to seek an easy way out of troubles often leads to worse difficulties. This is particularly true of labor-industrial relations.

No law on earth, except the Hitler variety, can compel workers to remain on a job when conditions become intolerable to them. In our free land, the right to strike is a basic freedom which cannot be abridged without destroying the whole fabric of our democracy.

The road toward industrial peace is a hard road. It must be paved with solid action, not encumbered with legal obstacles.

Leaders of labor and industry are now trying to smooth that road by cooperative action in the labor-management conference called by President Truman. Their chances of success will vanish if Congress upsets the whole basis of discussion and negotiation by voting new anti-labor laws at this time.

In the words of that great industrialist, Henry Kaiser, "labor relations are only a form of human relations." As a lawyer, I can testify from many years of experience that human relations are very rarely bettered but are very improved if they go to court against each other. Yet Congress is now proposing damage suits by employers against unions.

The Clayton Act proclaimed that labor is not "a commodity nor an article of commerce." It sought to protect workers and farmers from prosecution under the anti-trust laws. Yet now a small group of employers is asking Congress to subject workers to anti-trust suits as though their labor were merchandise.

Another proposal from this group calls for stringent government control and regulation of labor unions. But most American business men realize that federal regulation of unions is bound to be followed by strict federal regulation of industry, which would be a long step toward destroying free enterprise.

For these reasons, I urge that Congress follow the course outlined by President Truman and refrain from acting on any legislation of this nature until labor and management have a fair opportunity of solving their problems voluntarily and constructively through the conference now in progress.

Your Good Health

By NELSON CRUIKSHANK

AFL Social Security Director

Your good health is the nation's business, President Truman told Congress this week, in one of his most important messages since he assumed office. The President made these five recommendations:

1. Construction of hospitals and related facilities according to the needs of localities.

2. Extension of public health, maternal and child health services.

3. Aid to medical education and research with emphasis on research on the cause, prevention and cure of cancer and mental illnesses.

4. Prepayment of medical costs through some form of insurance.

5. Protection against loss of wages from sickness and disability through insurance.

The last two points of the President's program; namely the plans to meet the costs of medical care and the costs of sickness due to loss of earnings he wisely based on a system of compulsory insurance. He was right on that sound ground when he reminded Congress that there was nothing radical about these proposals as they were based on a principle as old as fire insurance.

"The American people" said the President "are the most insurance minded people in the world. They will not be frightened off from health insurance because some people have misnamed it 'socialized medicine'."

I should like to say one thing about the word "compulsory" since that is the point chosen for attack by the opponents of the President's recommendations. Compulsory insurance does not mean, as some of these persons imply, that everybody would have to go to the doctor selected by some politician or political office holder. It only means that every wage earner would have to subscribe to the fund out of which physicians and hospitals would be paid. That is the only way to be sure that all the sick people are those who have reason to believe they are about to become ill rushing into the program while the others stay out. Any so-called voluntary health insurance would be bound to be loaded with the poor risks.

The President's health insurance program is compulsory in the same sense that education of children is compulsory. That is, it must be all inclusive to be effective. Nobody would believe that we could keep up our freedom because our children are required to attend school up to a certain age. Nor shall we, despite all the scaremongering of frightened political doctors, lose our freedom when we in America decide to follow President Truman's proposal to provide a way for all the people to make medical care available to all the people.

SAY, LISTEN!

For the rest of this year, the AFL presents each Saturday evening at 6:45 P.M., EST, over the nation-wide network of the American Broadcasting Company a radio news-magazine, featuring the latest news at home and abroad and special reports by expert commentators on important labor problems. This program is listed in the radio columns of your newspaper as "Labor-U.S.A." Our own subtitle for the program is "The American Federationist of the Air." Don't miss these bright, newsy broadcasts! Listen every Saturday night!

Weekly AFL Radio Programs In 1946 Scheduled By Three Big Networks

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor again will broadcast a weekly radio program over coast-to-coast networks during the entire year of 1946, President William Green announced.

The National Broadcasting Co., the Columbia Broadcasting System and the American Broadcasting Co. have given assurances that they will make time available for the AFL to present its news and views on the air, just as they did this year.

During the first seven weeks of 1946, the AFL will take over the "Americas United" program which it initiated over NBC in 1944. This is a forum program in which the AFL, business and farm representatives discuss outstanding national issues with invited guests from the government. This program now originates every other Saturday evening from 1:15 p.m., Eastern time, on Sunday. There is a possibility that it may be enlarged to a half-hour period, instead of 15 minutes, next year.

The second 13 weeks on the air in 1946 will be furnished by CBS. The nature of this program has not yet been determined. Last year the AFL devoted these periods to a series of dramatized broadcasts about the Congress, the great majority of whom were recruited from members of AFL unions.

During the last half of 1946, the AFL will return to the "Labor-USA" program over ABC, which it is now winning on a series of 26 weekly editions of the American Federationist of the Air. These programs are broadcast from 6:45 to 7 p.m., Eastern Standard Time on Saturday evenings.

Living Costs Due To Soar As Price Subsidies End

Washington, D. C.—The ending of subsidies and the subsequent lifting of price ceilings can be expected to cause increases of from 10 to 40 percent in the prices of at least 37 basic foods within the next 6 months, it is stated in an official survey prepared by government economists for the Office of Price Administration and the Department of Agriculture.

John C. Collett, economic stabilizer, announced that food price subsidies will be reduced by the price rise by \$1,000,000,000. The congressional action placing subsidies back on these commodities, the economists say, would change the situation and make unnecessary any food price rise. At present, they say, the price rise is "unprecedented" and the congressional move is thus far known to be afoot to continue the subsidies.

The survey states that increases will be necessary in the prices of meats, bread, butter, milk, canned vegetables, cheese, dried fruit and other commodities.

The economists said the increases will cause the highest one-year percentage rise in the cost of living since 1930 and will increase the nation's food bill for 1946 more than \$2,000,000,000—from \$13 a person.

One of two subsidies controlling the price of butter was lifted Nov. 8 and the price rose 5 to 6 cents a pound.

Machinists Union Suspended By AFL For Failure To Pay Per Capita Tax

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green announced that the International Association of Machinists has been automatically suspended for failure to pay per capita tax in accordance with the provisions of the AFL Constitution.

Mr. Green therefore directed all local and state branches and departments of the AFL to disassociate the Machinists from membership.

In an official joint letter to State and Local Central Bodies, Mr. Green and Secretary-Treasurer Meany stated:

"The International Association of Machinists has discontinued its affiliation with the American Federation of Labor through refusal to pay per capita tax to the American Federation of Labor now November 1st. Section 3, Article X of the Constitution of the American Federation of Labor provides:

"Any organization affiliated with the Federation not paying its per capita tax on or before the 15th of each month and assessment or assessments when due and payable shall be notified of the fact by the Secretary-Treasurer of the federation, and if at the end of 3 months it is still in arrears it shall become suspended from membership in the federation, and can be reinstated only by a vote of the convention when such arrearages are paid in full, as provided in Section 2 of this article.

"Because of these facts the Executive Council directed the officers of the American Federation of Labor to call upon State Federations of Labor, City Central Bodies and Departments of the American Federation of Labor to immediately dissociate and suspend local unions of the International Association of Machinists from membership in State Federations of Labor, City Central Bodies and the departments of the American Federation of Labor.

"This action was based upon Section 1 of Article XI of the Constitution of the American Federation of Labor which provides that no central labor union, or any other central body of delegates shall admit to or retain in their councils delegates from locals of national or international organizations which are not chartered by the American Federation of Labor under penalty of having their charter revoked for violation of their charter, subject to appeal to the next convention.

"You are therefore officially directed to dissociate and suspend from membership immediately all affiliated local unions chartered by the International Association of Machinists."

Dan Tracy Wins Top Assignment In Shakeup of Labor Department

Washington, D. C.—Dan W. Tracy has come out on top of the heap after a shake-up in the Department of Labor.

Tracy, who left the presidency of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Union to become first assistant secretary of labor, had been reported ready to resign after Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach's office became he was side tracked.

However, former Maine Congressman Edward C. Moran, Jr., resigned as second assistant secretary after serving only four months and Secretary Schwellenbach has now given administrative supervision of the department to Tracy.

It is understood that Tracy will handle the reorganization plans and take charge of the effort to improve the efficiency of the department's personnel. A veteran trade-unionist, Tracy is thoroughly familiar with labor's needs for a stronger Labor Department.

VICTORY CLOTHING DRIVE AGAIN BACKED BY AFL

New York City—American labor used its organized strength last spring to help collect the used clothing which has saved 25,000,000 war victims overseas from death and cold. But even that magnificent response did not meet the dire need revealed when all of Europe, China and the Philippines were liberated. Wherever war has scorched the earth and razed the cities, countless millions of men, women and children are still inadequately clothed for winter weather, health and self-respect.

A nation-wide victory clothing collection for overseas relief will be held during the month of January—our first new year of peace—to gather clothing for these people still living in the ruin made by war. This drive has the hearty endorsement of the AFL, which has pledged its full cooperation to assure its success.

TIME AND PLACE SET FOR UNION LABEL SHOW

Washington, D. C.—Dates set for the 1946 AFL Union Label and Industrial Exhibition are Oct. 29 through Nov. 2. The time for the big show was determined at a meeting of the executive board of the Trades and Labor Union of St. Louis and vicinity at the St. Louis Union Label Trades Section. It will be held in the spacious Henry W. Kiel Municipal Auditorium.

The Union Label exhibition promises to be one of the foremost organized labor events of the coming year. Many national and international unions are now planning to have individual booths to display their union-made goods as well as to demonstrate union services. They are also urging the manufacturers and merchandisers of articles that are union-made to obtain display space at once in order to exhibit their respective products.

AFL Opens Emergency Drive To Beat Vicious Smith Bill

Congress Sits Down!

Washington, D. C.—Congressional orators who have been fulminating against organized labor because of strikes overlook the fact that Congress has conducted since V-J Day one of the most glaring and inexcusable sit-down strikes against the nation.

President Truman summoned Congress back into session shortly after victory was won in order to enact a "must" program of reconversion legislation necessary to help America get back on a peacetime footing. He submitted to Congress a sound and a workable legislative program. Not a single one of the measures he urged has been adopted.

No wonder the President publicly charged that Congress has "let him down!"

The list of the measures advocated by President Truman and the AFL against which the powerful anti-labor bloc in Congress has conducted a successful sit-down, follows:

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION — This measure was trimmed down drastically in the Senate and then pigeon-holed by the House Ways and Means Committee.

HIGHER MINIMUM WAGE—Many public hearings have been held but action has been stalled.

FULL EMPLOYMENT—This bill was amputated in the Senate and then even more cruelly mutilated by a House committee and the prospects are that no effective legislation will be adopted.

HOUSING—While everyone agrees that a national housing program is absolutely essential to quick postwar recovery, Congress hasn't made a move yet to expedite the Wagner bill which has bi-partisan support.

SOCIAL SECURITY—The Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill is buried in committee.

HEALTH INSURANCE—Opponents in Congress are befuddling the issue and planning to stifle any action.

This record of futility should be contrasted by the American people with the speed Congress showed in voting tax relief to big corporations and with the priority granted to consideration of anti-labor legislation.

AFL Members Urged By Green To Write Letters To Congressmen

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green sent out an emergency call to all members of the AFL to help defeat drastic and "wicked" anti-labor legislation now being considered by Congress.

He urged each and every one of the seven million members of the AFL to write individual letters to their Congressman and Senators opposing the pending Smith bill.

This bill, he explained, would provide strike penalties by permitting employers and any other person claiming damage from a work stoppage to sue the union and its members. It would also deprive such a union of its bargaining rights for the period of a year and subject unions to court injunctions. Finally, it would prohibit unions from engaging in political activities or making political contributions of any kind.

With the temper of Congress aroused by CIO strikes and threats of strikes in mass production industries and with no decisive results forthcoming as yet from the labor-management conference, the danger of enactment of hasty and ill-considered legislation inimical to the best interests of labor and the nation is considered grave by AFL leaders.

Mr. Green, therefore, rallied all affiliated organizations—including national and international unions, state federations of labor, city central bodies and directly affiliated federal labor unions—to join in the fight against the Smith bill, and, above all, to enlist their full membership in the campaign.

"Please act promptly upon receipt of this communication," he urged in a circular letter. "Organize a campaign in every town, community and locality of the country in opposition to this proposed anti-labor legislation. Call upon the friends of labor to work with you, to communicate with their representatives in Congress along with you, and call upon them to vote against this legislation."

Ironically enough, the new legislative onslaught against labor was engineered by Representative Howard Smith of Virginia as an added starter to his proposed repeal of the obnoxious Smith-Connally Act, which has proved a collosal failure. Rep. Smith was one of the co-authors of this bill which was designed to prevent strikes but, in fact, tended to encourage them.

His new measure has been denounced, not only by labor, but by many conservative newspapers which have forcefully pointed out that it may aggravate the tension in labor-industrial relations.

Nevertheless, the House Rules Committee gave the measure priority of consideration after a stormy hearing at which Rep. Biemiller, of Wisconsin, pointed out that the legislation, if enacted, will serve to restrict voluntary arbitration and may cause the deletion of no-strike clauses in labor-management contracts.

Green To Serve As Labor Chairman Of Infantile Paralysis Campaign

New York City—Organization of national labor unions into the fund drive for 1946 March of Dimes, to be conducted January 14-31 by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, was announced from the office of Basil O'Connor, president of the National Foundation.

Appointed cochairman of the National Labor Division was William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor. Thomas N. Cashen, chairman of the Railway Labor Executives Association, was given a similar post.

In the past, unions have actively supported the March of Dimes through their own fund-raising organizations. In 1945, AFL members contributed \$162,850.95 to the National Foundation. These figures are exclusive of individual donations made at movies and other public functions.

Mr. Green has served as cochairman of the National Labor Division since the founding of the organization in 1938 by the late President Roosevelt. Cashen served as a labor cochairman in the 1945 drive.

Of all contributions to the annual March of Dimes, half remains with local chapters of the National Foundation for equipment, transportation, hospital treatment and care of poliomyelitis patients, regardless of age, race, creed or color. The other half goes to the National Foundation for research, education and emergency aid during epidemics.

In a letter of acceptance to Foundation President O'Connor, Mr. Green said:

"I respond wholeheartedly and with a feeling of pleasure to your request that I continue to serve as cochairman of the National Labor Division of the 1946 March of Dimes.

"Be assured it is my sincere and earnest desire to cooperate with you and those associated with you in the administration of the affairs of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in rendering service to the nation and to those afflicted with infantile paralysis."

OPA Asks Aid of Organized Labor In Fighting Profiteering Stores

Washington, D. C.—The OPA, in order to combat overcharging by retailers, has made available to consumers blank forms of anti-overcharge coupon — the Consumer Anti-Inflation Shopping List.

The overcharges by retailers selling at higher than ceiling prices, cost each worker's family at least one to two weeks salary each year . . . and threaten to take even more.

The OPA says that handy tools to use. The shopper need no longer carry cumbersome blanket size ceiling price lists in order to check prices. With this list, the shopper needs only to write down the items purchased, the brand, size or weight and the prices paid. He or she then sends the completed list to the nearest War Price and Rationing Board for checking.

Members of organized labor are being urged to make full and aggressive use of these lists in order to wipe out illegal sniping at their pay checks.

Leo F. Lucas, AFL representative in the OPA, Labor Office said:

"Every member of the AFL should protect the buying power of his dollar by striking hard at these retailers who illegally cut themselves in for a slice of the workers salary. Action on this front is especially important now that pay envelopes have shrunk by as much as 25 percent as a result of the cessation of the overtime pay era. We can eliminate this extra 'tax' on our salary by supporting and using these Anti-Inflation Shopping Lists."

The OPA Labor Office through its Regional Labor Advisers, District Labor Advisory Committees and local union Cost-of-Living Committees plans to help labor to utilize fully this "Consumer Anti-Inflation Shopping List" as an enforcement weapon against overcselling charges.

RAILWAY LABOR CONFERS ON SHORTER WORK WEEK

Chicago.—Representatives of railroad management and labor opened a conference here on railroad workers' demands for a 40-hour week and increased hours.

Committees representing Eastern, Western and Southeastern railroad groups and heads of 20 railroad brotherhoods are participating.

The American Federation of Labor Railway Employes Department, representing some 850,000 shopcraft workers, had a list of demands including a work-week reduction of from 48 hours to 36—8-hour day and 6-day week—without reduction in straight-time weekly pay.

UNEMPLOYMENT WAVE HAS PASSED ITS PEAK

Washington, D. C. — Reconversion unemployment passed its first crest and has temporarily leveled out, according to a summary of postwar unemployment compensation claims, the Social Security Board announced.

Although some 5,000,000 war workers lost their war jobs through the wholesale cancellation of war contracts after Japan's surrender, less than 3,700,000 individuals were filing claims for unemployment insurance during each of the past 6 weeks, and only some 1,260,000 of these were actually receiving unemployment insurance checks.

BOILERMAKERS UNION JOINS LABEL TRADES

Washington, D. C.—The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers of America has affiliated with the Union Label Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor, L. M. Ornburn, Secretary-Treasurer of the department, announced.

Under the leadership of its international officers, President Charles J. MacGowan and Secretary-Treasurer Wm. J. Buckley, the boilermakers union has made unprecedented gains in membership and has become one of the larger unions in the American labor movement.

Its official shop card is exhibited only in shops which have a signed agreement with the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders and Helpers of America.